

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ERDA-05 ACDA-05 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-03 FEAE-00

INT-05 AID-05 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /109 W

----- 002385

R 021233Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4784

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY KIGALI UNN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, BY

SUBJECT: URANIUM DISCOVERY IN BURUNDI

OVER LAST TWO WEEKS, SEVERAL PEOPLE WITH CONTACTS TO PRESIDENT MICOMBERO AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN REPORTING THEIR ELATION OVER "MAJOR" URANIUM FIND IN BURUNDI. FRIENDLY MEMBER OF UNDP MINERALS SURVEY TEAM TOLD ME MAY ONE THAT DISCOVERY MAY TURN OUT TO BE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR BURUNDI ECONOMY THAN NICKEL DEPOSITS.

ORE SITE IS JUST SOUTH OF SMALL TOWN OF KAYANZA (ABOUT 13 MILES BELOW RWANDAN BORDER ON BUJUMBURA-KIGALI ROAD). TWO DRILL HOLES HAVE BEEN DUG, AND ANALYSIS OF FIRST SAMPLES COMPLETED THIS WEEK HAS SHOWN ABOUT ONE QUARTER OF ONE PERCENT URANIUM. THIS WAS DESCRIBED AS VERY HIGH CONCENTRATION, AND RICHER

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THAN NIGER ORE. EXTENT OF ORE BODY IS STILL UNKNOWN BUT

FAIRLY LARGE SIZE IS SUSPECTED. CHIEF OF UNDP MINERALS
EXPLORATION DIVISION IS EXPECTED WITHIN MONTH FROM NEW YORK
TO REVIEW TECHNICAL SITUATION. ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT GEOLOGISTS
WHO HAVE RECENTLY BEEN SECONDED TO UNDP TEAM HERE ARE PROMINENT
IN EXPLORATION WORK BECAUSE OF THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH URANIUM.
ANOTHER TEAM MEMBER HAS ALSO RECENTLY VISITED BASTNASITE (RARE EARTH)
MINE, RUN BY BELGIAN CONCESSION IN MOUNTAINS ABOUT 25 MILES
SOUTH OF BUJUMBURA. THERE HE FOUND SURFACE TRACES OF URANIUM (SIX
HUNDREDTHS OF ONE PERCENT) WHICH LEADS TEAM TO BELIEVE SUBSURFACE
ORES ASSOCIATED WITH EUROPIUM CONTAIN METAL QUALITY URANIUM (ABOVE
TENTH OF ONE PERCENT). TEAM SUSPECTS CONCESSIONAIRES FOUND THIS OUT
YEARS AGO AND HAVE BEEN SECRETLY MARKETING SOME URANIUM ALONG
WITH RARE EARTHS IN EUROPE. BURUNDI AUTHORITIES IS NOW
CONSIDERING PROBLEM OF RENEGOTIATING TERMS OF CONCESSION
TO ENSURE THAT ANY URANIUM FIND ACCRUES TO GOVERNMENT.
MARK

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